

## **Dr. Curt Stern, 79, Influential Teacher Of Human Genetics**

Curt Stern, an influential figure in American genetics, died last Friday at a hospital in Sacramento, Calif., after a long illness. He was 79 years old.

Dr. Stern was known internationally for his work on the fundamental mechanisms of heredity and for his advocacy of teaching the principles of human genetics in medical schools.

Some of his basic contributions to genetics were made through study of the chromosomes of the fruit fly, *Drosophila*, in the "fly room" at Columbia University with Thomas Hunt Morgan, the pioneer American geneticist, shortly after World War I.

Dr. Stern's influence on the teaching of genetics to American medical students began with a course on the principles of human genetics at the medical school of the University of Rochester, which he first taught in 1943. His book, "The Principles of Human Genetics," was published in 1949.

### **Earned Doctorate at Age 21**

He was born in Hamburg, Germany, on Aug. 30, 1902, and received a Ph.D. in zoology at the University of Berlin in 1923, when he was only 21 years old. He was then selected by the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute to go to Columbia University on a fellowship.

He went back to Germany later but returned to the United States in 1932 and remained, becoming a citizen in 1939.

Dr. Stern taught at the University of Rochester from 1933 to 1947 and then moved to the University of California at Berkeley, where he spent the rest of his scientific career, reaching emeritus status in 1970.

He is survived by his wife, Evelyn; three daughters, Hildegard Zinotroff of Athens, Holly Elisabeth Ynostroga of Piedmont, Calif., and Barbara Ellen Griffith of Sacramento, and six grandchildren.